

Bear River North Regional Council Meeting Minutes
Bridgerland Applied Technology College
Logan, Utah
Wednesday, August 15th, 2007 – 8:00 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.

In attendance:

David Bryan	Pepperidge Farm
Commissioner William Cox	County Commissioner, Rich County
David Farnes	Pioneer Care and Rehabilitation
Colyn Flinders	Division of Rehabilitation
Cindi Grant	Convergys
Commissioner John Hansen	Cache County Council Member
Dawn Hollingsworth	State of Utah, Department of Human Services
Randy Hopkins	State of Utah, Department of Workforce Services
Kelly Johnson	E.A. Miller
Roger Jones	Bear River Association of Governments
Michael Liechty	Cache School District
Peggy Madsen	Box Elder County Employees
Evan Maxfield	Wheatland Seed
Lana Powell	State Farm Insurance
Bruce Rigby	Zions Bank
Thom Smith	Alcoa
Susan Thackeray	Economic Development
Richard VanDyke	Box Elder County Commission
Scott Williams	U.S.U. Extension Agent 4-H Youth Development

Excused:

Vern Gunnell	United States Air Force, and B.A.T.C.
Jim Hooker	Hooker Appliance
Chad Munns	Munns Manufacturing
Dawn Skorka (Past-Chair)	Wal-Mart
Michelle Wilson	Life-Skill and Individual Needs Center

Guests:

Dan Bseio	Western Governor's University
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Department of Workforce Services Staff:

Jill Bingham	Brigham E.C. Manager
John Mathews	North Region Economist
Carrie Peterson	Administrative Secretary
Debbie Sparks	Logan Area Manager
Susan Wright	Regional Council Liaison

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. **Welcome**

Thom Smith, Chair-elect Bear River North Regional Council, welcomed all D.W.S. staff and Council members to the meeting.

Bruce Rigby has consented to serve as the Vice-chair of the Bear River North Regional Council.

Dawn Skorka will be recognized at a future meeting for her direction of the Bear River North Regional Council as Chair for the past two years.

2. **Consent Calendar Action Items**

Thom Smith called for approval of the minutes from the March 14th Bear River North Regional Council meeting.

Action: Kelly Johnson made the motion, Colyn Flinders seconded, and the Council unanimously approved the March 14th meeting minutes.

3. **Manufacturing Career Fair**

A decision was made to postpone the Manufacturing Career Fair event. It will be conducted at the Bridgerland Applied Technology College (B.A.T.C.) in April of 2008.

Kelly Johnson recommended demonstrating E.A. Miller in the meat lab, and other employers in the B.A.T.C. to show the facility.

4. **Committee Reports**

A. Marketing and Training for Employers Task Force and Training and Job Seekers Committee

The B.A.T.C. has scheduled a Job Fair September 12th from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. There are 35 employers signed up to participate in the Job Fair.

Colyn Flinders reported about the job fair held in Ogden for public offenders. He reported the parolees are eager to gain employment and employers offer recruitment.

Action Item: Evan Maxfield made the motion, Colyn Flinders seconded, and the Council unanimously approved the Marketing and Training for Employers, and the Training and Job Seekers Committee reports.

5. **Regional Youth Council Report**

Scott Williams, Youth Council Chair, reported that the Council has been experiencing success with the Summer Youth Program. The numbers of the youth enrolled have increased to 19.

The Youth Council voted to accept the changes mandated by the DOL to the WIA Youth Service Priority System form. Effective July 1, 2007, two new categories have been added, Native American, and Refugee. The category of Chronic Health Conditions including Disabilities was changed to Disabled. The approved motion added the point value of 2 to Refugee. Youth, who participate in the program, are required to score 4 points to be eligible for the program.

The W.I.A. youth from Brigham City and Logan participated in the Youth Leadership Program on April 28th. The Leadership Project this year was for youth to prepare and send care packages to soldiers serving in the military in Iraq. Two speakers attended the meeting to talk with the youth.

Two W.I.A. Youth success stories were included in the meeting packets.

Action Item: Bruce Rigby made the motion, David Farnes seconded, and the Council unanimously approved the Youth Council reports.

6. **Western Governor's University**

Dan Bseio reported that \$3 million dollars are available to support Western Governor's University (W.G.U.). The head quarters are located in Murray, Utah. In 1997, the University was set up by 19 Governors to fill the need for local institutions that meet training needs in rural areas. The University is private non-profit, which allows them to focus on the courses. The program is completely on-line and targeted at adults.

The quality of on-line participation has improved as multi-media, and "voice over IP" have provided additional resources. The program allows the students to participate in courses offered by different educational institution. Dan explained that Moore's law states that in 18-months computer efficiency will double. The program uses a large audience. The "proctor based" program is used to ensure students complete the courses and tests on-line. Progress counselors are available on-line to help the students complete the courses on-line. Mentors are also hired to walk the students through the problems they may experience. If the students meet the G.P.A. requirements, the students will continue on there course track. The University has private supporters that help keep tuition costs low. The University is regionally accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

W.G.U. is the first and only Teacher Accredited On-line Program. The objective of the grant is to test the learning model to determine if it will increase the number of teachers in rural areas (K-12). State Credentialing has been achieved as the program is recognized. The program is used to prepare rural Science and Math Teachers through a distance learning demonstration project.

There are 160 scholarships available with the value of \$7,500, which is allocated as \$1,500 per term in five renewable terms. This covers approximately 55% of total tuition cost.

The student profile is they must live in a rural area, have an educational background, and be self disciplined for two hours of class participation each night

W.G.U. was created with \$10 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2003. Over 5,000 students nationwide have completed the program nationwide and have obtained their Bachelor's Degree, Post-Baccalaureate, and Master's Degree.

This program would be a good option for students who are living in a rural area and would like to obtain a degree. Dan asked the Council members to contact him if they know anyone who would like to enroll in the program. For a teaching degree the cost is \$9,000 to \$14,000 to complete the degree on-line which compares to \$25,000 to \$35,000 to complete the program in traditional college programs.

WGU is marketing the training program for teachers. To date, 36 of the 160 available scholarships have been awarded. The tuition is affordable for most students; if they receive the scholarship they can obtain their degree for \$5,000 to \$6,000 dollars.

Mike Liechty asked if tuition assistance is available, or if Pell grants are available.

Dan Bseio reported that the program is a governed student loan program.

The program is competency-based and accelerated. The expectation is will take 2.5 years to complete the program.

Roger Jones asked how many students are currently enrolled in the program.

Dan Bseio responded the total enrollment is 8,032 students.

Roger Jones asked how many staff work at W.G.U.

Dan Bseio noted that in Murray, there are 140 total staff, and 280 nationwide with regional representatives.

Bruce Rigby asked what the placement percentage is.

Dan Bseio explained that prior to the grant, a percentage component was not set-up, the placement component for the University is currently being established.

Cindi Grant asked if for the computer access if rural access would be satisfactory.

Dan Bseio reported yes.

The University uses a pass / fail evaluation.

Representatives will meet with the students prior to their enrollment to help ensure they are a good fit for the program. The goal is to keep the drop-out rate for the University below 20%.

7. Northern Utah Economic Update

John Mathews, D.W.S. North Region Economist, distributed copies of the new benefit study and the Trendlines magazine.

John provided an economic update for Cache, Rich, and Box Elder counties.

John reported that construction in other state is not growing, but here in Utah it continues to grow as it continues to have double-digit growth rates.

In terms of population, Utah is in the center of the fastest growing region in the country. The job growth rate in Utah is up 3.3%. The economic information is supplied from the data reported quarterly by employers.

Utah has a low unemployment rate, as it is currently at 2.6%. Unemployment rates increased during the recession but have since decreased.

- Box Elder 2.8%
- Cache - 2.1%
- Rich - 2.4%
- Utah - 2.6%
- U.S. - 4.5%

Total new jobs for Cache County increased by 1,565.

At this time, challenges are growth and labor shortages. With unemployment so low, businesses are having trouble finding workers.

The State average wage is \$16.63. Because of the concentration of manufacturing in Box Elder County ranks third in Utah counties for wages, at \$4,176 (\$18.32/hr). State wages at \$2,883 (\$16.63 / hr) are above the Cache average \$2,169 (\$12.51 / hr). Minimum wage increased July 24th, 2007.

John offered his assistance with any questions the Council members have or are interested in gathering additional information. He can be contacted at johnmathews@utah.gov or at (801) 526-9467.

Rich Van Dyke, Box Elder County Commission, asked if the construction on the roads contributed to the construction growth rate.

John Mathews reported yes.

The slide show will be emailed to the Council members for future review.

7. **Other Business**

8. **Public Comment**

No general public representatives or non-members of the Regional Council attended the meeting.

9. **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.